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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/603,132	06/23/2000	Brian A. Vaartstra	150.00650102	3538

7590

11/25/2002

Mueting Raasch & Gerbhardt PA
PO Box 581415
Minneapolis, MN 55458

EXAMINER

LEE, EUGENE

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2815

DATE MAILED: 11/25/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/603,132

Applicant(s)

VAARTSTRA ET AL.

Examiner

Eugene Lee

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 September 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 27-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 27-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 27 thru 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Matsubara et al. '923. Matsubara discloses (see, for example, Fig. 1 and column 3, lines 43-) a capacitor comprising a silicon substrate 1, lower electrode (first electrode) 3, dielectric layer (high dielectric material) 4, and upper electrode (second electrode) 5. The lower electrode is made from RuSi_2 and may consist of layers of ruthenium, ruthenium oxide, ruthenium silicide and stacked structures (see column 4, lines 24-27).

3. Claims 27, 28, 30 thru 33, and 36 thru 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kuroiwa et al. '460 B1. Kuroiwa discloses (see, for example, Fig. 8) a semiconductor device comprising substrate 101 and a ruthenium silicide layer 132 in between a plug 111 and metal electrode 130. Also, see column 13, lines 12-14 of Kuroiwa.

Regarding claims 30-33 and 36-44, Kuroiwa shows (see, for example, FIG. 10) a capacitor structure comprising metal electrode (first electrode) 130, capacitor dielectric 115 and upper electrode (second electrode) 116. The ruthenium silicide layer 132 is formed from a portion of metal electrode 130.

Product-by-Process Limitations

4. While not objectionable, the Office reminds Applicant that “product by process” limitations in claims drawn to structure are directed to the product, per se, no matter how actually made. *In re Hirao*, 190 USPQ 15 at 17 (footnote 3). See also, *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685; *In re Luck*, 177 USPQ 523; *In re Fessmann*, 180 USPQ 324; *In re Avery*, 186 USPQ 161; *In re Wethheim*, 191 USPQ 90 (209 USPQ 554 does not deal with this issue); *In re Marosi et al.*, 218 USPQ 289; and particularly *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, all of which make it clear that it is the patentability of the final product per se which must be determined in a “product by process” claim, and not the patentability of the process, and that an old or obvious product produced by a new method is not patentable as a product, whether claimed in “product by process” claims or *otherwise*. Note that applicant has the burden of proof in such cases, as the above case law makes clear. Thus, no patentable weight will be given to those process steps which do not add structural limitations to the final product.

The limitation “chemical vapor codeposited” merely recites a method of forming and does not deviate from the **structure of a diffusion barrier made of RuSi_x**. Therefore, such “product-by-process” language is given no patentable weight.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 27-44 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Also see “product-by-process limitations” paragraph above. The Office considers the limitation “chemical vapor codeposited” as a process limitation that only states how a diffusion

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barrier is formed. Since the applicant's claims are directed towards product and not method, the Office will only give consideration to limitations that are pertinent to the final structure of the device.

Sputtering and chemical vapor codepositing are two different methods used to form a same structure, in this case, a layer of RuSi_x .

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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INFORMATION ON HOW TO CONTACT THE USPTO

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eugene Lee whose telephone number is 703-305-5695. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eddie C. Lee can be reached on 703-308-1690. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-7722 for regular communications and 703-308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.

Eugene Lee
June 8, 2002



EDDIE LEE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800